

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1.) Claim Status

Claims 12, 14-17, and 21-23 are pending in the application. Claims 1-11, 13, 18-20, and 24-48 have been canceled. The Applicants have amended claims 22 and 23 to make them depend from allowed claim 12. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

2.) Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's allowance of claims 12, 14-17, and 21.

3.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

In paragraph 3 of the Office Action the Examiner rejected claims 43 and 47 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Yokoo et al. (US Publication US 2003/0191560 A1). The Applicants have canceled claims 43 and 47.

4.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In paragraph 5 of the Office Action the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 6-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashina et al. (US 5,758,282) in view of Yokoo. The Applicants have canceled claims 1 and 6-7.

In paragraph 6 of the Office Action the Examiner rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashina in view of Yokoo as applied to claims 1, and 6-7 above, and in further view of Pelissier et al. (U.S. Pat. 6496503). The Applicants have canceled claim 5.

In paragraph 7 of the Office Action the Examiner rejected claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashina in view of Yokoo as applied to claims 1, and 6-7 above, and in further view of Babbitt et al. The Applicants have canceled claim 11.

In paragraph 8 of the Office Action the Examiner rejected claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashina in view of Yokoo and Babbitt as applied to claim 11 above, and in further view of Singhal et al. (U.S. Pat. 6633761). The Applicants have amended claim 22 to depend from allowed claim 12. Therefore, the allowance of claim 22 is respectfully requested.

In paragraph 9 of the Office Action the Examiner rejected claim 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashina in view of Yokoo as applied to claims 1 and 6-7 above, and in further view of Lipsanen (U.S. Publication US 2003/0191560 A1). The Applicants have amended claim 23 to depend from allowed claim 12. Therefore, the allowance of claim 23 is respectfully requested.

In paragraph 10 of the Office Action the Examiner rejected claim 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashina in view of Inoue, et al. (U.S. Pat. 6587882) and Pelissier et al. The Applicants have canceled claim 31.

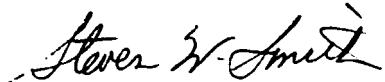
In paragraph 11 of the Office Action the Examiner rejected claim 46 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashina in view of Ahmed, et al. (U.S. Pat. 6735202). The Applicants have canceled claim 46.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicants believe all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for claims 12, 14-17, and 21-23.

The Applicants request a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,



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